

World Englishes (2) : Chinese English and Globish

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Abstract: Powered by the Internet and the global media, English has now become the most important communication tool for the international world. But it must be a kind of English which can be learned quickly and used very easily. More vivid and universal than ever, English is now used, in some form, by approximately 4 billion people on earth. As a mother tongue, only Chinese is more prevalent, with 1.8 billion native speakers — 350 million of whom also speak some kind of English. With a growing population of English learners and speakers in China, the development of Chinese English is noticeable. This paper gives explicit consideration to the rise of Chinese English and the birth of Globish.

1. Introduction

All over the world an increasing number of people are using more and more varieties of English. English has now become the language of international communication. There are many more speakers of World Englishes and people who use English for international communication than there are native speakers of it. Indeed there are probably one billion multilingual speakers of English in Asia, of whom 300 million are Chinese. This means that there are more multilingual Chinese speakers of English than there are British and American native speakers. These figures throw the importance of Chinese English into relief. The first half of the paper describes the changes in World Englishes and the rise of Chinese English. The second half suggests directions for the birth of Globish and the future of World Englishes.

2. Changes in World Englishes

First we shall consider the classifications or models of world Englishes. The most common classification of Englishes has been to distinguish between English as a native language (ENL), English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). This ENL/ESL/EFL distinction has been useful in the language teaching world. However, this classification has shortcomings. Kirkpatrick (2007:28) argues as follows:

One is that the term ‘native language’ is open to misunderstanding. As speakers in ENL countries are described as native speakers, people feel that the variety used is a standard variety that is spoken by all of the people. People then feel that ENL is innately superior to ESL and EFL varieties and that it therefore represents a good model of English for people in ESL and EFL countries to follow. In actual fact, however, many different varieties of English are spoken in ENL countries. The idea that everyone speaks the same “standard model” is simply incorrect. Second, the suggestion to use ENL as “the model”

ignores the fact that such a model might be inappropriate in ESL countries where the local variety would be a more acceptable model, as there are many fluent speakers and expert users of that particular variety.

A second shortcoming of the classification is that the spread of English also means that it is more difficult to find countries that can be accurately classified as EFL countries. English is playing an increasing role in EFL countries such as China and Japan.

Another influential classification is the 'three circles' model put forward by Kachru (1985:366-7)

The current sociolinguistic profile of English may be viewed in terms of three concentric circles...The inner Circle refers to the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English. The Outer Circle represents the institutionalised non-native varieties (ESL) in the regions that have passed through extended periods of colonization... The Expanding Circle includes the regions where the performance varieties of the language are used essentially in EFL contexts.

Kirkpatrick (2007:28) notes the advantages of this model as follows:

The great advantages of this model over the ENL/ESL/EFL one are, first, that it makes English plural so that one English becomes many Englishes. Second, the model does not suggest that one variety is any better, linguistically speaking, than any other. The spread of English has resulted in the development of many Englishes and not the transplanting of one model to other countries: 'English now has multicultural identities'.

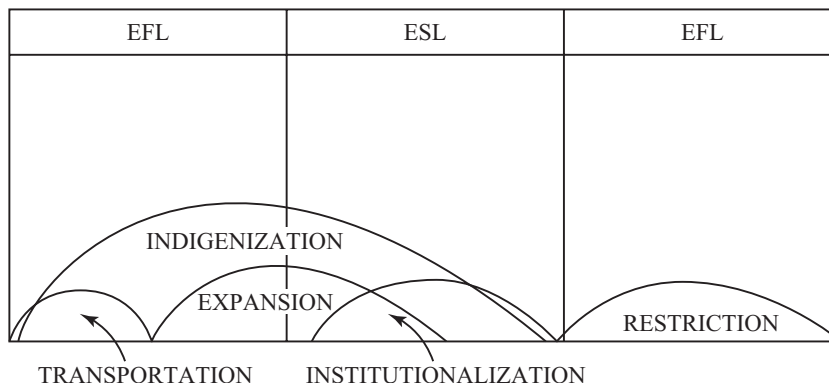
Kirkpatrick's indication is appropriate in the point that ENL/ESL/EFL themselves have equality of status, but inappropriate in the point that he keeps ENL/ESL/EFL from the static point of view socio-linguistically. The shortcomings of Kachru's 'three circles' model is that it underestimated the roles that English would come to play in Expanding Circle countries. The term 'expanding circle' suggests that the roles of English would develop in these countries, especially in China. The increasing roles of English in China are well worth consideration.

Concretely speaking, English in China is now being used in education. The number of people learning English in China is now greater than the combined populations of the inner circle countries. The number of English learners in China is more than three hundred million. Several Chinese schools and universities now offer courses through the medium of English. Chinese students are now beginning to be able to study in English by the native teachers of Chinese.

Next we consider the world Englishes from the dynamic point of view socio-linguistically. There is a close relationship between the development of pidgins, creoles and varieties of English. We shall focus

on developmental cycles as applied to varieties of English. These cycles are comparable to pidgin and creole developmental cycles. Moag (1992:233-52) studied the development of a particular variety — Fijian English — and proposed ‘The Life Cycle of Non-Native Englishes (Figure 1)’.

Figure 1. The Life Cycle of Non-Native Englishes



According to Kirkpatrick (2007), Figure 1 is explained as follows:

He(Moag) identified five processes, four of which are undergone by all varieties, and a fifth which may only be experienced by some. The first process he called“transportation”. This is when English arrives in a place where it has not been spoken before and remains to stay. The second process,“indigenization”, is a relatively long phase during which the new variety of English starts to reflect the local culture and becomes different from the transported variety. The third process, the “expansion in use” phase, sees the new variety being used in an increasing number of situation and for more and more purposes. This process is also marked by an increase in variation within the local variety. The local variety becomes the local varieties. The fourth phase is marked by the use of the local variety as a language learning model in school. During this phase, local literature in the new variety will be written. Moag calls this fourth phase“institutionalization”The fifth and final phase sees a decline in use. He suggests that the Philippines and Malaysia are examples of countries where the increased official promotion of a local language — Tagalog in the Philippines and Malay in Malaysia — results in a decline in the use of the local variety of English. (Kirkpatrick (2007:31))

New trends in the World Englishes, especially Chinese English are that the increasingly common phenomenon of local teachers + intranational *lingua franca* use is providing an alternative process for the development of new varieties of English.

3. The Rise of Chinese English

It is believed that English was first used when the Chinese and English businessmen communicated in the early seventeenth century in Canton. English has a different and much higher status now. Today, the researchers say that Chinese English is a developing member of World Englishes, and therefore it should be regarded and researched like other members.

The rise of Chinese English (CE) began when China adopted an open door policy in the 1970s. This policy helped China to modernize. China is one of the world's economic powers today where English is becoming increasingly important in intercultural communication. Xu (2010:195) points out the areas as follows:

Compared with intracultural communication among speakers of CE, intercultural communication between Chinese and other speakers of English takes place in a much wider range of domains, including politics, economics, culture, diplomacy, the military, science, technology, business, trade, finance, tourism, education, and various industries involving non-Chinese speakers of English.

With so many opportunities to interact with people from around the world, a positive and enthusiastic attitude has developed among the people. Introduction of the Internet has increased the opportunities to use English not only internationally, but to some extent domestically.

4. The Birth of Globish

According to McCrum (2010), the rise of Globish first became obvious in 2005, when an obscure Danish newspaper called *The Jutland Post* published a sequence of satirical cartoons poking fun at the Prophet Muhammad. English slogans like BUTCHER THOSE WHO MOCK ISLAM FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION GO TO HELL and DOWN WITH FREE SPEECH are typical examples of Globish.

Jean-Paul Nerrière, who described English and its international deployment as “the worldwide dialect of the third millennium”, had noticed that non-native English speakers in the Far East communicated in English far more successfully with their Korean and Japanese clients than British or American executives when posted to Japan with IBM in the 1990s.

Standard English was all very well for Anglophones, but in the developing world, this non-native “decaffeinated English” — full of simplifications like “the son of my brother” for “nephew”, or “words of honor” for “oath” — was becoming the new global phenomenon. (McCrums:2010)

Nerrière christened the above examples ‘Globish’. For Nerrière, Globish was a kind of linguistic tool, a version of basic or so-called Easy English with a vocabulary of just 1,500 words. McCrum (2010) insisted that Globish

was the newly globalized lingua franca, essential English merged with the terminology of the digital age and the international news media.

The following examples are contrasts of American English and Globish.

AMERICAN: This little tidbit of literary joy is amiable and a slam dunk to peruse, notwithstanding the fact that it has the overwhelming gall to propose a revamping of our methods of verbal exchange around world.

GLOBISH: This book is easy to read and with pleasure. Still, it proposes a complete change in the way we communicate around the world.

AMERICAN: Native English speakers can't quite hack it when they need to dumb down to the 1,500 key words. The language they have to speak or write is expected to be kosher, if not perfect.

GLOBISH: Native English speakers have great difficulties when they want to reduce their words down to the 1,500 key ones. On top of that, the language they have to speak or write is expected to be correct, if not perfect.

EXAMPLES FROM JEAN-PAUL NERRIÈRE, S WEB SITE, JPN-GLOBISH.COM

There are some differences between English and Globish. The characteristics of Globish are as follows:

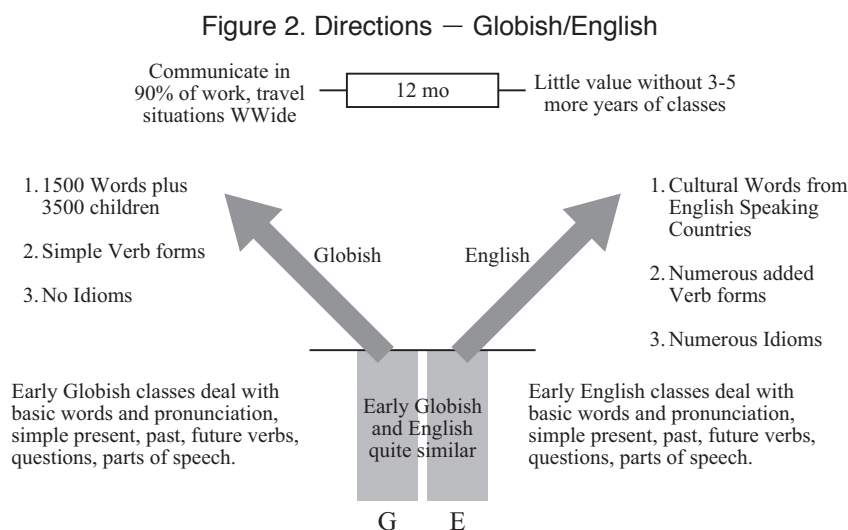
- use short sentences
- use words in a simple way; as any advertiser or politician knows
- use only the most common English words, and
- help communication with body language and visual additions

Jean-Paul Nerrière and David Hon (2009:81)

According to Jean-Paul Nerrière and David Hon (2009:85-8), furthermore, seven concrete suggestions are as follows:

- Globish has 1500 words, expandable in four ways
- Globish uses mostly Active Voice
- Globish suggests short sentences (15 words or fewer)
- Globish pronunciation has fewer necessary sounds than traditional English
- Globish speakers use their body, their hands and their faces when they talk
- Globish speakers are very careful about humor, idioms and examples
- Globish is a "Closed System of Natural Language."

The directions of Globish/English are illustrated as follows (Figure 2):



5. World Englishes in the future

This is the first time in history that one language like English is so widely used in the world and has generated a number of varieties. The reason for the development of these varieties lies in the purpose of its use. In the end, the purpose will determine the future of World Englishes. At present, two distinct purposes come to light - communication on the domestic stage and identity on the international one.

First, the English variety helps in communication among the people of a country where the population speaks many different languages. For example, there are many ethnic groups in Nigeria, and each group has a distinct language, but English with local vocabulary and recognizable pronunciation came to rescue. This is not the same English that the British brought to Nigeria. The same phenomenon could be observed in other British colonies with different local languages.

Second, when political leaders negotiate or make speeches in world conferences in English, their variety becomes part of the identity of their country on the international stage. The words used in these occasions may not include local vocabulary, but the pronunciation of the speaker may clearly establish the identity of that nation. It is obvious that the English variety of a country is fulfilling very important purposes; one within the country, and one internationally. When the growing number of English learners and speakers is taken into account, it is apparent that World Englishes will play a dominant role in the world.

6. Conclusion

We live in a world where the number of native speakers of English is much smaller than the English speakers who speak a different native language. These non-native speakers of English are the force behind Globish and

World Englishes. With a growing population of English learners and speakers in China, the development of Chinese English can be felt clearly. Bestseller-readers in China are Globish readers. In 2010, if there is one nation whose modernizing mission should benefit from Globish, it must be the new China. China's soaring ambitions and booming economy have changed the dynamics of Chinese English.

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世界諸英語 (2)

ー中国英語とグロービッシュー

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抄録：英語は、国際社会において最も重要なコミュニケーション・ツールであるが、その英語はすぐに身につけて簡単に使える種類の英語でなくてはならない。今や、英語は国際語として新たな段階に突入したといわれる。現在、英語で会話する国際社会の仲間入りを急速に、しかも、広範囲に行っているのが中国である。世界諸英語の中でも、アジア英語、その中でも東アジア英語、東アジア英語の中でも中国英語が注目されている。今では、英語を母語とするのはおよそ4億人であるが、中国語使用者のうち、3億5千万人が何らかの形で英語を使っているとされる。本稿では、中国英語とグローバル化に適した簡易型英語といわれ、世界共通語になりつつあるグロービッシュについて考察する。